

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 02515 111100Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 TRSE-00
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O 111031Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5641
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 2515

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, IS
SUBJECT: PERES DECLARES THERE WILL BE NO MAJOR CHANGE IN POLICY

1. FOLLOWING HIS SELECTION LAST NIGHT AS THE LABOR
PARTY'S CANDIDATE FOR PRIME MINISTER, SHIMON PERES
HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE. BELOW IS THE TEXT OF
TODAY'S JERUSALEM POST ARTICLE REPORTING HIS
REMARKS:

2. BEGIN TEXT: A WEARY BUT SELF-ASSURED SHIMON
PERES YESTERDAY EVENING ADDRESSED A PRESS CONFERENCE
PACKED WITH FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS WHO TREATED HIM
AS ISRAEL'S NEW PRIME MINISTER, ASSURING THEM THAT
"THERE WOULD BE NO SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE IN ISRAEL'S
FOREIGN POLICY" UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP.

3. WHEN ASKED ABOUT HIS IDENTIFICATION AS A HAWK,
THE PRESENT DEFENSE MINISTER ANSWERED THAT HE IS
NEITHER HAWK NOR DOVE BUT A REALIST. HE DECLARED
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THAT THE FOREIGN POLICY HE WOULD PURSUE AS THE
LABOR PARTY'S NEW LEADER WOULD BE "A CONTINUED
STRIVING FOR MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE
NEIGHBORING ARAB STATES FOR THE PURPOSE OF
ACHIEVING A TRUE PEACE."

4. HE SAID THAT HE IS COMMITTED TO THE PARTY'S

PLATFORM AND WOULD "FAITHFULLY ATTEMPT TO EXECUTE IT" BEFORE CONSIDERING ANY CHANGES. THIS PLATFORM, HE SAID, INCLUDES A READINESS FOR TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS ON ALL THREE FRONTS IN THE CONTEXT OF PEACE TALKS.

5. AS TO U.S. PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER'S REFERENCE TO A NATIONAL HOME FOR THE PALESTINIANS, PERES EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT CARTER'S STATEMENT HAD BEEN VERY BROAD AND NOT CLEARLY DEFINED. IN ANY CASE, HE ADDED, ISRAEL HAS NO OBJECTION TO NEGOTIATING WITH PALESTINIANS AS SUCH. IT WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, AGREE TO TALKS WITH THE PLO, HE SAID.

6. PERES SAID THAT HE DID NOT OPPOSE THE PROPOSED GENEVA MIDDLE EAST TALKS, BUT HE HOPED THEY WOULD BE PREPARED WELL SO AS NOT TO RAISE UNREASONABLE HOPES WHICH WOULD LEAD TO DANGEROUS DISAPPOINTMENT.

7. ON THE QUESTION OF SETTLEMENT POLICY IN THE WEST BANK, PERES SAID THAT HE FELT THAT ONLY SETTLEMENTS WHICH HAD GOVERNMENT APPROVAL SHOULD BE PERMITTED. HE HIMSELF GAVE PRIORITY TO THE REINFORCEMENT OF JERUSALEM BY A RING OF SETTLEMENTS ON ALL FOUR SIDES.

8. PERES GAVE A CRYPTIC REPLY TO A QUESTION ABOUT HIS ATTITUDE TO THE (FOREIGN MINISTER YIGAL) ALLON PLAN, WHICH IS A PROPOSED ARRANGEMENT FOR SETTLING THE WEST BANK, UNDER WHICH HEAVILY POPULATED AREAS

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WOULD BE RETURNED TO JORDAN AND SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS WOULD BE ANNEXED BY ISRAEL. "I HAVEN'T CHANGED MY MIND ABOUT IT," HE SAID.

9. HE WAS THEN ASKED ABOUT THE RECENT LABOR PARTY COMMITMENT MADE TO FORMER DEFENSE MINISTER MOSHE DAYAN THAT IF A COALITION PARTNER DEMANDED IT, NEW ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD BEFORE EFFECTING ANY TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS ON THE WEST BANK TO JORDAN. "I, TOO, SIGNED THE LETTER THAT WAS SENT TO DAYAN ON THIS MATTER," PERES REPLIED.

10. TURNING NEXT TO THE SITUATION IN LEBANON, PERES SAID THAT THE CHRISTIAN VILLAGERS ON THE LEBANESE BORDER ARE IN A GOOD POSITION TO DEFEND THEMSELVES. HE DENIED THAT ANY CHRISTIAN VILLAGES HAD BEEN OVERRUN. "KHAYAM WAS NOT A CHRISTIAN VILLAGE," HE SAID.

11. IF THE TERRORISTS IN THAT AREA ENDANGERED
THE SECURITY OF ISRAEL IN THE NORTH, ISRAEL
WOULD TAKE THE PROPER STEPS, HE PROMISED.

12. ADMITTING THAT HE HAD HAD ONLY "FOUR OR
FIVE HOURS SLEEP" SINCE THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF
PRIME MINISTER YITZHAK RABIN'S RESIGNATION ON
THURSDAY NIGHT, PERES SAID THAT HE WOULD BEGIN
HIS CAMPAIGN AS HEAD OF LABOR'S LIST ON
WEDNESDAY. END TEXT
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Disposition Event:
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